



Voting Information News

August 2007 Vol. 17, No. 8

A roundup of voting news from the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) for voters, potential voters and those who assist voters.

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Voting Assistance Officers

“To Do” This Month:

☒ Remind new arrivals in your area to notify their local election officials of their new mailing address because election materials generally cannot be forwarded in the mail. The FPCA can be used to request a mailing address change with the local election official in the citizen's voting residence state. Ensure they clearly indicate on the form their old and new address.

☒ Have you requested a Voting Training Workshop in your area? Please email vote@fvap.ncr.gov as well as your Service Voting Action Officer (contact information on Page 3) to submit your request. A regional Workshop schedule is now being planned with training to begin this Fall.

(continued on next page)

2008-09 Voting Assistance Guide Coming Soon!

The Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) is currently in the process of coordinating the 2008-09 edition of the *Voting Assistance Guide* with the Chief Election Officials in each of the states and territories. The state officials are reviewing their sections and updating it with procedural and address changes which have occurred since the printed 2006-07 edition of the *Guide* that was distributed in 2005. Production and printing of the *Guide* will begin later this summer with distribution to the Services and Service Voting Action Officers by September. We are striving to have the *Guide* distribution completed earlier this year to allow ample time for Voting Assistance Officers to plan and implement their 2008 voter outreach efforts prior to the early primary elections in 2008.

The *Guide* is the most important source of procedural information available to Voting Assistance Officers and citizens covered by the *Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA)*. The new and improved *Guide* is designed to be more user-friendly than ever. Chapter One provides vital information for Voting Assistance Officers to be used in the performance of their duties, Chapter Two features the absentee voting process for UOCAVA citizens, and Chapter Three contains specific state-by-state procedures and instructions for UOCAVA citizens to apply for registration and request an absentee ballot from their state of residence. The new edition also features the Presidential, state and runoff election dates on the first page of each state's section (where applicable). A chart includes state deadlines for registering to vote, requesting a ballot and returning the voted ballot. The new *Guide* also provides:

- A copy of the UOCAVA law (as amended by the *National Defense Authorization Act* and the *Help America Vote Act of 2002*)
- Procedures for using the Electronic

Transmission Service (faxing and emailing service)

- Frequently asked questions for Uniformed Service members and overseas citizens
- U.S. Embassy and Consulate email addresses
- Special sections on the Federal Post Card Application and the Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot
- Procedures for ordering voting materials
- Primary and general election calendars for 2008
- FVAP toll-free phone and fax numbers from overseas

Production of the *Guide* requires extensive coordination with state and local government officials to ensure the information is both accurate and in an easy-to-follow format. The up-to-date *Guide* will help UOCAVA citizens to better understand and participate in the democratic process. It will be available in book format and on the FVAP's website at www.fvap.gov, as well as being included in the E-Learning CD-ROM (to be available at a later date).

Once the revised *Guide* has been issued, copies of the previous edition of the *Guide* (if available) can only be used for educational purposes. Since some of the information in the previous *Guide* edition is outdated, it should not be used to assist UOCAVA voters.

Once the *Guide* is printed, it will be available through normal distribution channels. Check with your Installation Voting Assistance Officer or your Service Voting Action Officer (see Page 3 for contact information) to ensure that you are on the distribution list for the *Guide* and other voting program materials. U.S. citizens' organizations overseas should contact the FVAP to obtain voting publications. ☒

Share your good ideas! Send your voting assistance program good ideas and lessons learned to your Voting Action Officer. Contact information is on page 3.

"To Do" This Month

(continued):

☒ If you are a new Voting Assistance Officer, review the online Training Workshop presentation for VAOs at the FVAP Website www.fvap.gov to obtain a brief orientation of the program. Chapter Two of the *Voting Assistance Guide* (also online) provides an overview of your responsibilities as a VAO.

☒ Be sure to keep your voting continuity folder up-to-date by keeping all important voting information in the folder. Put a copy of each *Voting Information News* in the folder. This will help to ensure your successor receives a quick orientation of his or her voting responsibilities upon your departure.

☒ Check to be sure all persons you assist (including family members) are aware of upcoming elections and have the necessary knowledge and materials to participate in these elections. Several states will hold elections for state offices this Fall.

☒ If you currently receive this newsletter by mail and would prefer to receive it via email, please contact us by email at:

vote@fvap.ncr.gov.

You may receive the newsletter by mail, electronically, or in both formats. Online versions of the newsletter and news releases are also available on the FVAP website, www.fvap.gov.

2007 Slogan Contest Winners Announced

On April 9, 2007 the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) 2007 Slogan Contest concluded. The Voting Slogan Contest is a biennial event sponsored by the FVAP in its efforts to promote interest in the democratic process among citizens covered under the *Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA)* – the members of the Uniformed Services, the Merchant Marine, their family members, and all U.S. citizens residing outside the United States. The winner of this year's slogan contest will be featured in the FVAP's 2008/2009 informational and motivational materials, which focus on increasing voter awareness among U.S. citizens worldwide. Additional slogans will be featured in the state sections (Chapter Three) of the *2008-09 Voting Assistance Guide*.

The FVAP received thousands of entries from around the globe for this year's slogan contest promoting voter awareness. The Voting Assistance Officers' (VAOs) dedicated efforts in encouraging citizens to enter the contest helped generate high participation rate; brought attention to the voting program and gave citizens a better idea where to find guidance and assistance on absentee voting.

The Winner of the 2007 Slogan Contest is YNC Karen Bassingthwaite, U.S. Navy, of Tampa, Florida for her slogan: *"Be Smart, Do Your Part. Vote!"*

The FVAP would also like to recognize the following participants and their slogans.

2nd Place: *"Freedom. You have it, Use it. Vote."* By Cheryl Hill, U.S. Army Spouse, Fort Benning, Georgia

3rd Place: *"Away? Still have your say – Vote!"* By Anna Eagan, Cameron, West Virginia

4th Place: *"You're never too far away to vote."* By Marianne Cadle, Peace Corps, Paraguay

The following slogans received Honorable Mention:

"Spread the Wings of Freedom. Vote this election." by John Ford, USMC Civilian, Quantico, Virginia

"Your vote, America's strength!" by Patricia Hatch, Phoenix, Arizona

"It's your turn. Vote!" by Lance & Shauna Bauer

"Voting, the voice of one, the right of all." by TSgt Lianna Fitzpatrick, USAF, Cameron, North Carolina

The FVAP also thanks all citizens from around the globe who submitted slogans. ☒

Do you have a Good Idea or Lesson Learned?

The FVAP supports and encourages developing, collecting, sharing and implementing good ideas and lessons learned regarding the absentee voting process.

An Absentee Voting Good Idea is an idea that has proven to be helpful to the citizens you are responsible for providing assistance, and helpful to you in the performance of your duties. Good Ideas are also processes and procedures that have produced excellent results within an organization and have contributed significantly to the mission of your Voting Assistance Program.

Send your good ideas or lessons learned to your State Department or Service Voting Action Officer (contact information on page 3) using the guidelines provided in the Voting Assistance Guide (available at www.fvap.gov).

Overseas citizen organization VAOs and individuals may submit their good ideas directly to the FVAP via email, vote@fvap.ncr.gov. ☒

Good Ideas Shared from Bangkok, Thailand

The Voting Assistance Program at the U.S. Embassy-Bangkok informed their American public of voting news and information in seven different ways. First, the Voting Assistance Officer (VAO) was added to the FVAP Headquarters mailing list, and sent out emails to all the other Voting Officers and Assistants throughout Thailand, keeping them informed on important issues regarding voting and any changes to elections and other voting events.

Second, throughout the year, the VAO sent out "Voting News and Information Bulletins" to the Embassy employees and their families by utilizing the Embassy's newsletter to inform them of their voting rights and how to make their vote count.

Third, the VAO posted news and information on the Embassy's public website and on the Consular Information Kiosk in the consular section's waiting room. An "Absentee Voting" web page for Bangkok's public website was also created. This web page assists Americans in Thailand with their voting needs and helps them to register to vote without coming to the Embassy. One of the perks of this website was the ability to download all the necessary forms and instructions. All links on the web page directly connect to the FVAP website to ensure the right information is given and to ensure all information is non-partisan. The on-site kiosk provided Americans without access to a personal computer to download and print out any relevant materials they needed in order to vote.

Fourth, the VAO attended the 4th of July Picnic that was open to the American public and assisted VAOs from other organizations in getting Americans to register to vote and to request their absentee ballots. This was also a great

opportunity to inform the American public of the Embassy's role in the Voting Assistance Program.

Fifth, the Embassy sent out regular emails about voting and the election to Americans registered with the Embassy through the Internet Based Registration System (IBRS) and with a 3rd party email list server managed by the ACS Unit. These emails reminded the public of important voting dates, registration procedures, how to request absentee ballots, etc, and provided them with links to websites that would assist them with their voting needs.

Sixth, the VAO was a featured guest speaker at the Embassy's 2006 Warden Conference, on 29 September 2006. She discussed three main points during her allotted time: *The Voting Assistance Guide*, the Federal Post Card Application, and the Voting Absentee web page on the Embassy's public website. This was a great opportunity to remind the Wardens (more than two dozen from all over Thailand attended) and other Embassy staff of the Federal Voting Assistance Program and the voting rights of U.S. citizens.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the VAO created a Voting Assistance Officer/Assistant Continuity Binder. This binder includes, but is not limited to, correspondence with the FVAP regarding voting issues dealing with Thailand and points of contact for various Voting Officers from other agencies. The binder also includes FVAP regulations and Foreign Affairs Manual voting guidance, *Voting Assistance Guide* Changes and Corrections, Headquarter and Post News Releases, and fax receipts for FPCA or ballots that were transmitted by post, in case of problems later on. This Binder will help ensure the Embassy will continue to provide a high level of voting assistance long after the VAO departs his or her post. ☑

Voting Action Officers

Department of State: Office of Overseas Citizens Services

Chief VAO: Mr. Jack Markey, **tel:** (202) 736-4937, **fax:** (202) 647-6201, **email:** votinginfo@state.gov
Deputy VAO: Ms. Stefanie Eye, **tel:** (202) 647-5435, **fax:** (202) 647-6201
http: <http://usinfo.state.gov/dhr/democracy/elections.html>

Service Voting Action Officers

U.S. Dept. of the Army: Mr. Alton Perry **tel:** (703) 325-4530 **DSN:** 221-4530; **fax:** (703) 325-4532
DSN fax: 221-4532, **email:** alton.c.perry@conus.army.mil,
https: <https://www.hrc.army.mil/site/Active/TAGD/pssd/psb/votingindex.htm>

U.S. Dept. of the Navy: LT David Truman **tel:** 1-866-U-ASK-NPC (827-5672) (select option 6 from menu),
fax: (901) 874-6825, **DSN fax:** 882-6825, **email:** vote@navy.mil,
http: http://www.cni.navy.mil/cnic_hq_site/BaseSupport/CommandStaff/NavyVotingProgram/index.htm

U.S. Dept. of the Air Force: Mr. Gilbert D. Harrison, Jr. **tel:** (210) 565-5000, **toll free:** 1-800 616-3775 (Select options 1, then 1, then 2 from menu), **DSN** 665-5000; **fax:** (210) 565-2543, **DSN fax:** 665-2543;
email: DPSOOF.VOTINGFUND@Randolph.af.mil;
http: <http://www.afcrossroads.com/VoteFund/Vote/default.htm>

U.S. Marine Corps: Mr. David E. James **tel:** (703) 784-9511, **DSN:** 278-9511; **fax:** (703) 784-9823,
DSN fax: 278-9823; **email:** david.e.james@usmc.mil
https: https://www.manpower.usmc.mil/pls/portal/url/page/m_ra_home/MR/Personnel/Voting

U.S. Coast Guard: LTJG Dave Solorzano **tel:** (202) 475-5375, **fax:** (202) 475-5375;
email: Dave.N.Solorzano@uscg.mil
http: http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g-w/g-wp/g-wpm/g-wpm-1/VotingAssistance/Voting_Assistance.htm

Federal Voting Assistance Program

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20301-1155

PHONE:
(703) 588-1584
DSN 425-1584

FAX:
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DSN 426-1352

VOTING INFORMATION
CENTER (VIC):
(703) 588-1343
DSN 425-1343

TOLL FREE (VIC and FVAP
staff member):
1-800-438-VOTE (8683)

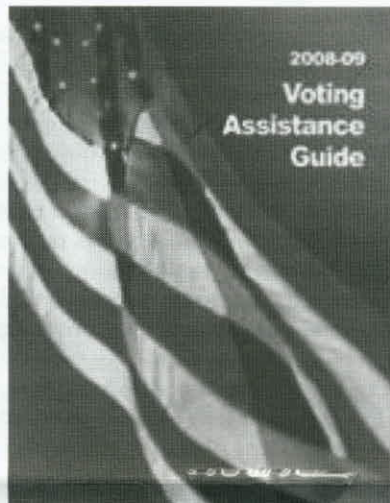
Visit our website for
international toll-free phone
and fax numbers.

EMAIL:
vote@fvap.ncr.gov

Comments or suggestions on
this newsletter are welcome.

Website:
www.fvap.gov

Vote!



Thank You!

We would like to acknowledge the advice and assistance given by the Secretaries of State, Directors of Elections, and their staff in the preparation of the *2008-09 Voting Assistance Guide*. We also thank the Graphics Department of the Department of Defense, Washington Headquarters Services for making this document possible.

Additionally, special thanks go to participants in the *2008-09 Voting Assistance Guide* Review Committee and the organizations they represent, including: the U.S. Army, U.S. Navy, U.S. Air Force, U.S. Marine Corps, U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Department of State, U.S. Department of Justice, U.S. Election Assistance Commission, Association of American Residents Overseas (AARO), Federation of American Women's Clubs Overseas (FAWCO), International Association of Clerks, Recorders, Election Officials and Treasurers (IACREOT), National Association of County Recorders, Election Officials and Clerks (NACRC), Democrats Abroad, and Republicans Abroad International. ☑

Moving? Send an FPCA to notify your local election official. Also, send us an email so that you and your replacement can continue receiving this *newsletter*.

Federal Voting Assistance Program
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